

PRESS RELEASE

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CRIME FILMS BY JOSEPH H. LEWIS AT THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

At the beginning of his directorial career, Joseph H. Lewis (b. 1900) worked quietly in the ranks of nameless Hollywood craftsmen who churned out low-budget westerns, thrillers, and other "B" movies during the thirties and forties. With the 1945 release of My Name is Julia Ross, a stylish sleeper in the Hitchcock mode, he became known. His subsequent work--still low-budget films--enhanced his reputation as a master of "pulp" cinema, with their raw power, directness, rhythm, visual beauty, stylistic flourishes, and strong performances. In the sixties, French and American film critics branded Lewis an "auteur" and saw the seeds of one of that decade's most influential movies, Arthur Penn's Bonnie and Clyde, in Lewis' best-known film, Gun Crazy.

The Cleveland Museum of Art will present Lewis' best films, all of them crime melodramas, over three Wednesdays in April. Shown at 8 pm, all are free and open to the public.

April 6 - Gun Crazy, USA, 1949. With Peggy Cummins and John Dall. B&W. 87 min. Reckless young lovers embark on a senseless crime spree.

April 13 - So Dark the Night, USA, 1946. With Steven Geray and Micheline Cheirel. B&W. 71 min. In this unusual, atmospheric film, a vacationing detective tries to solve a murder in a small French village.

April 20 - The Big Combo, USA, 1955. With Cornel Wilde, Jean Wallace, and Brian Donlevy. B&W. 89 min. Raw, violent thriller about a ruthless mobster, his society-girl moll, and an unscrupulous cop.

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